

Register results

The following actions have been taken by Federal agencies. They have previously been summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER as proposals. Extent of consumer comment is reported when such information is available.

•**Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** has issued final regulations banning the use of zirconium in aerosol drug and cosmetic products. The original proposal was the result of a recommendation by an expert panel that was studying antiperspirants. This panel reported that some forms of zirconium cause lung disease in animals. FDA received 21 consumer comments in favor of the proposed action and 10 comments from 3 drug manufacturers against the ban. Sept. 15 is effective date. Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 16, page 41374; June 5, 1975, page 24328. CONSUMER REGISTER: July 1, 1975.

•**Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** has amended its standards of identity for certain varieties of Italian cheeses to permit the addition of "safe and suitable" mold-inhibiting ingredients to the cheeses during the manufacturing process. FDA received 20 comments from industry and consumers. Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 2, page 39101; May 20, 1976, page 20690. CONSUMER REGISTER: July 1, 1976.

•**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** has amended its automatic crash protection (air bags or passive safety belts) rules that will require all passenger cars sold in the US to have such protection by model year 1984. The schedule will be phased in gradually beginning Sept. 1, 1981 with crash protection for all front seat positions for standard and luxury-size cars. Details—*Federal Register*: July 5, page 34289; March 24, page 15935. CONSUMER REGISTER: April 15. For additional information call or write Tad Hirlihy, Office of Chief Counsel, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Washington, DC 20590; telephone 202-426-9511.

Warranties

Sept. 15 is deadline for comments on **Federal Trade Commission's (FTC)** proposed rule to make it easier for consumers to take advantage of a full warranty under the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act. If the rule is adopted, it would be "unreasonable" for a warrantor offering a full warranty to require that consumers

- Pay for the costs of mailing a product to or from a warranty service point.
- Return to the warranty service point a product that weighs over 35 pounds.
- Complete and return a registration card shortly after purchase in order to make the warranty effective.
- Return a built-in product for service unless it can be removed easily.

In addition to receiving comments on the proposal, FTC will hold public hearings as follows:

Oct. 3

Everett M. Dirksen Federal Bldg.
219 S. Dearborn St.
Chicago, IL

(To speak, call or write—by Sept. 19—Alline Brown, Federal Trade Commission, 55 E. Monroe St., Chicago, IL 60603; telephone 312-353-3775.)

Nov. 7

Room 13114, 11000 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA

(To speak, call or write—by Oct. 24—Paul M. Updegrave at above address; telephone 213-824-7575.)

Dec. 6

Room 532 Federal Trade Commission Bldg.
Washington, DC

(To speak, call or write—by Nov. 22—Gary M. Laden at above address; telephone 202-724-1145.)

Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 3, page 39223. Send comments to John A. Gray, Presiding Officer, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580.)

Progestins

Sept. 20 is deadline for comments on **Food and Drug Administration's (FDA)** proposal to require that women taking progestins (sex hormones) be given simply written brochures

telling them that using progestins during early pregnancy can increase the risk of birth defects in the offspring.

According to one study, babies born to women who had taken the sex hormones during the first 3 months of pregnancy were 4 to 5 times more likely to have abnormalities of the arms or legs than if their mothers had not taken such drugs. Some of the women had taken the drugs for only a few days. This is why FDA feels it is important for women to know they should not use progestins to test for pregnancy or to prevent miscarriages.

FDA approves the use of progestins for women with various menstrual difficulties.

This proposal is similar to a patient-labeling regulation for women who use estrogen for the discomforts of menopause [CONSUMER REGISTER: Aug. 1, Oct. 15, 1976].

Details—*Federal Register*: July 22, pages 37643 and 37646. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Food and Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857. For additional information call or write Herbert Gerstenzang at above address; telephone 301-443-3650.

Appliances: Energy testing and labeling

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act requires that **Federal Energy Administration (FEA)** direct the **National Bureau of Standards (NBS)** to develop "energy efficiency improvement targets" for appliances and that FEA issue rules on these targets for consumer products covered in the Act. Targets must be designed to attain maximum energy efficiency feasible by 1980 as determined by FEA. FEA considers targets feasible when production and shipment of more energy efficient products are economical, and when benefits exceed costs of implementing proposed targets.

Act also requires the development of test procedures to check progress by manufacturers in establishing and meeting targets, and further requires **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** to use this information in developing energy efficiency labeling rules for appliances to give consumers energy information that can help them in making purchases.

The following appliances are covered in the Act: Refrigerators and refrigerator-freezers, freezers, dishwashers, clothes dryers, water heaters, room air conditioners, home

heating equipment, furnaces, television sets, kitchen ranges and ovens, clothes washers, humidifiers, dehumidifiers and central air conditioners.

CONSUMER REGISTER has already summarized several proposed and final rules relating to appliance testing and labeling, and the **Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA)** has commented on these energy efficiency targets [CONSUMER NEWS, this issue].

Following are the most recent FEA notices relating to appliance testing and energy efficiency targets.

Sept. 10 is the effective date for a final rule setting test procedures for dishwashers. FEA issued the rule which defines terms and conditions for tests designed to measure energy efficiency under the Act.

FEA received comments from industry, consumers and Federal and state agencies on these procedures when proposed. Most comments came from industry and dealt with technical aspects of the test procedures, but some were directed toward information that will eventually be placed on labels. Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 8, page 39964.

Sept. 12 is deadline for comments on proposed 1980 energy efficiency targets for humidifiers, dehumidifiers and central air conditioners. After making technological and economic analyses of the feasibility of improving energy efficiency of these products, FEA has issued the following proposed energy efficiency targets for 1980:

- Humidifiers—18% improvement;
- Dehumidifiers—28% improvement;
- Central air conditioners—25% improvement

Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 11, page 40701. Mark comments "Proposed Energy Efficiency Improvement Targets" along with the particular appliance type to which comments apply. Send to Executive Communications, Federal Energy Administration, Box OG, Washington, DC 20461.

Sept. 27 is deadline for comments on FEA's amended proposal for energy testing procedures for furnaces. Proposal covers definitions of terms, laboratory methods and provisions for determining regional costs based on heating needs in different geographic regions.

Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 11, page 40826. Send comments to Executive Communications, Federal Energy Administration, Washington, DC 20461.

For further information on any of these items and on scheduled hearings call or write James A. Smith (Program Office), Old Post Office Bldg., Federal Energy Administration, Washington, DC 20461; telephone 202-566-4635.

Metric road signs

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has withdrawn its advance notice of a proposed rule that would have set a recommended timetable for converting traffic signs to the metric system.

Because FHWA received so many negative comments on the proposal it has also decided not to convert its Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices to metric standards at this time.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 1, page 33770; April 27, page 21807. CONSUMER REGISTER: May 15.

Rate Register

For several years CONSUMER NEWS has been carrying RATE REGISTER as a regular supplement to CONSUMER REGISTER. RATE REGISTER contained information on proposed and actual final rulings by Federal agencies on interstate fares, tariffs and rates that affected consumers.

With this issue of CONSUMER NEWS we are discontinuing RATE REGISTER as a separate section because we find there are rarely enough rate-making actions that significantly impact consumers to warrant maintaining a separate section for them. However, we will continue to summarize noteworthy rate proposals in CONSUMER REGISTER and to report on other important developments in the ratemaking area. To facilitate consumer participation in Federal agencies' rulemaking processes, we are using some of the space formerly used by RATE REGISTER to enlarge the comment forms, in response to reader suggestions. We encourage you to let agencies know how you feel about proposed actions that are reported in CONSUMER REGISTER.

Metric wine bottles

Oct. 21 is deadline for comments on **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms** (ATF) proposal to permit the use of larger wine containers than the present metric standards allow. As it stands now, by Jan. 1, 1979 all wine bottles will have to be converted to metric, and the largest size permitted will be 3 liters (101 fluid ounces).

ATF says industry and consumer commenters now say that the present metric standards of fill are more restrictive than the US standards of fill—which include one, 3 and 4.9 gallon sizes. (One consumer petitioner asked for a 4 liter standard of fill to replace the gallon. The consumer pointed out that the 3 liter size is 21% smaller than a gallon and that many consumers may prefer the larger size for both convenience and economy.) ATF points out, however, that in 1974 when it was considering various sizes, not much interest was expressed in sizes larger than one gallon.

ATF is proposing to authorize additional larger wine sizes by using one of 2 alternate proposals:

- Add either a 4 or a 5 liter size to the metric standards of fill.
- Permit the use of any size container larger than 3 liters as long as containers are filled and labeled in even liter amounts.

ATF does not at this time know if public hearings will be held, but requests to hold or testify at such a hearing must be received by the comment deadline—Oct. 21.

Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 22, page 42231. CONSUMER NEWS: April 1. Send comments to Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Washington, DC 20226. For additional information call or write Charles N. Bacon at above address; telephone 202-566-7626.

This listing, prepared by Marion Q. Ciacchio, is intended only as summary coverage of selected *Federal Register* items deemed of particular interest to consumers, and it does not affect the legal status or effect of any document required or authorized to be published pursuant to Section 5 of Federal Register Act as amended, 44 U.S.C. 1505. *Federal Register* is published Monday through Friday (except Federal Government holidays) by **Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration**. Subscription is \$5 a month or \$50 a year and may be ordered from **Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402**. Superintendent also sells copies of *Federal Register* for 75¢ each. Copies of *Federal Register* may be available in depository libraries.

consumer comment

Federal agencies want to learn your views on proposals and other items published in the *Federal Register* and CONSUMER REGISTER. Agencies use these comments in their decision making.

These forms are provided for you to use, if you wish, in commenting on these items. For more lengthy comments, feel free to use a plain sheet of paper. Send comment forms to addresses listed in CONSUMER REGISTER summaries. CONSUMER NEWS is publishing these forms in cooperation with the **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**.

Name _____ Date _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Clip this form, fill in blanks, write your comments & mail to agency noted in CONSUMER REGISTER item.

This is my opinion on (title of item in CONSUMER REGISTER) _____

by (name of agency) _____

published in *Federal Register* on (date) _____ on (page) _____

(over)

Name _____ Date _____

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CONSUMER REGISTER publishes proposed and final rules, regulations and notices of interest to consumers originally appearing in the *Federal Register*. Notices on proposed rules published in the *Federal Register* and summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER give consumers the opportunity to participate in rule making prior to the adoption of final rules. The *Federal Register* is published to provide a uniform system for making available to the public regulations and legal notices issued by Federal agencies.
